

**Minutes of the Mexicali/Imperial Valley Air Quality Task Force Meeting**  
San Diego State University, Imperial Valley Campus  
May 13, 2004, Imperial Valley, California

Co-chairs Kimberly Collins and Margarito Quintero welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Each member introduced themselves.

There was a presentation of a study on vehicle emissions in Calexico/Mexicali and El Paso/Juarez. This study was done with the help of Co-chairs Margarito Quintero and Kimberly Collins.

Objective: To develop a system to measure vehicle emissions and differentiate between particulate matter emissions from vehicles and dust. To identify high emitters and provide guidance to focus control efforts. Methods and materials were explained in detail. (Sampling was downwind of vehicles using four main instruments: a photo acoustic analyzer for measuring black carbon (soot), a CO<sub>2</sub> analyzer to develop the fuel based emission factors, a photoelectric aerosol sensor to measure particle bound PAHs and a dust tract for measuring total particle concentration).

Motivation: To see the relationship of these contaminants with adverse health factors. Results were presented in the form of charts. The study was funded by SCERP. Students from UABC and San Diego State did traffic counts, TNRCC and persons from Ciudad Juarez helped in sampling and the Institute for Combustion and Energy Studies from the University of Utah also sponsored the project. There was a Q&A period at the conclusion of the presentation.

Updates by federal, state, and local governments:

Salvador Blanco was due to come in from Mexico City to talk about the National Information System on Air Quality (SINAICA), but could not make it.

Gabriel Ruiz from the California Air Resources Board talked about the status of a project to get air quality data on the web in real time, for the Imperial Valley - Mexicali and answered questions on the subject.

Christine Vineyard from EPA talked about the emissions inventory project, which was started under Border 21 for the Northern Mexican states. The final draft of the summary emissions inventory report is now out for comment and the data is available on a website. The information obtained will serve to establish a baseline for air quality in the border region. As far as funding, Christine reported that a mechanism for getting the money to the task force has been established, the only pending issue now is State Department clearance to transfer the funds.

Amy Zimpher from EPA discussed a rule that establishes new engine standards for heavy duty off-road vehicles (includes construction equipment, agricultural equipment, locomotives and some marine engines) was just signed. This rule begins to go into effect in 2007 and ultimately 2010 and it will reduce emissions from off-road diesel engine vehicles by 90%. Concurrently, new standards have been adopted for low sulfur diesel fuel. Diesel particulate emission reduction is becoming a high priority for the EPA and significant funding is being dedicated to voluntary projects to reduce emissions from diesel fueled engines.

Projects by the Air Pollution Control District:

- The CNG fueling facility to be built in Calexico maintenance yard is moving forward and should be operational within the next three months and will be available to the public.
- The windblown dust study, funded by a grant from EPA. The final draft copy has been produced and should impact the way the emissions inventories are calculated.
- The international cross border emission reduction credit program, also funded by EPA. Some companies on the US side have shown interest. Companies on the Mexican side will be contacted to gauge interest.

There was mention of the draft EIS for the power lines for the new power plants in Mexicali. There will be public hearings on June 17 at City Hall in Calexico and El Centro.

By SEMARNAT:

Efforts are being focused on incorporating the air quality monitoring networks that currently exist in Tijuana and Mexicali into the National Information System on Air Quality. These networks have been funded and operated by EPA. An agreement is being drafted between EPA and SEMARNAT to initiate the transfer of air quality monitoring networks to the Mexican side.

By State Ecology Administration (DGE):

- DGE maintains records of emissions by industrial plants. By law, any facility that produces emissions into the air must be registered and monitored by DGE on an annual basis. Industries must meet certain criteria in order to renew their license to continue to operate.
- PIPCA: A program to pave roads and neighborhood streets in Mexicali. This project started last year and is ongoing. The goal is to pave 85% of roads and surface streets in 5 years.

At the Municipal level in Mexicali:

- There is a project to establish a center for verifying automobile emissions and making the verification process mandatory. The first stage will involve verification of all government and public transportation vehicles, and eventually extend the procedure to cover the general population.
- A council was created to regulate the modernization of the public transportation fleet, to ensure that older buses are gradually replaced.

There was mention of the minutes from the last meeting, which were e-mailed to everyone for comments. Input was also requested to build up the membership list.

Review of the Strategic Plan Draft:

Based on the Border 2012 Objectives, several priorities were identified, such as:

- To educate the local population about air quality issues.
  - To develop and implement projects to clean sources of pollution.
  - To collect and maintain accurate long term data on air quality and respiratory health.
  - To develop the local capacity to deal with specific issues that affect air quality locally.
- Several specific projects were mentioned, indicating where they tie into the strategic plan. This was presented as a working draft for review and comments.

There was mention of air quality monitoring equipment which PROFEPA has and which is not being used because of lack of personnel and training, and assistance was offered by Margarito and by other attendants.

The next meeting was scheduled for August 12 from 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. at UABC in Mexicali, and the meeting was adjourned.